United Nations A/C.2/57/SR.43

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session
Official Records

Distr.: General
24 November 2003
English
Original: French

Second Committee

Summary record of the 43rd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 11 December 2002, at 11 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Suazo ..... (Honduras)

Contents

Agenda item 86: Sustainable development and international economic cooperation (*continued*)

(d) High-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership (*continued*)

Agenda item 92: Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields (*continued*)

Agenda item 93: High-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development (*continued*)

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

02-73283 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 11.35 a.m.

Agenda item 86: Sustainable development and international economic cooperation (*continued*)

(d) High-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership (*continued*) (A/C.2/57/L.15 and L.82)

Draft resolutions A/C.2/57/L.15 and A/C.2/57/L.82: High-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership

1. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should adopt draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.82, submitted following informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.15.

2. *It was so decided.*

3. *Draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.82 was adopted.*

4. *Draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.15 was withdrawn.*

5. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should take note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "The involvement of civil society organizations other than non-governmental organizations and the private sector in technical cooperation activities: experiences and prospects of the United Nations system" (A/57/118).

6. *It was so decided.*

7. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 86 (d).

Announcement concerning delegations wishing to co-sponsor draft resolutions

8. **Mr. Fass-Metz** (Germany) said that his delegation wished to join the list of co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.11, entitled "Year of Kyrgyz Statehood".

Agenda item 92: Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields (*continued*) (A/C.2/57/L.33 and L.81)

Draft resolutions A/C.2/57/L.33 and A/C.2/57/L.81: World Food Summit: five years later

9. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should adopt draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.81, submitted following informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.33.

10. *It was so decided.*

11. *Draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.81 was adopted.*

12. *Draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.33 was withdrawn.*

13. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should take note of the report of the Secretary-General on integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit (A/57/75-E/2002/57).

14. *It was so decided.*

15. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 92.

Agenda item 93: High-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development (*continued*) (A/C.2/57/L.36, L.44, L.62, L.74 and L.80)

Draft resolutions A/C.2/57/L.36 and A/C.2/57/L.80: High-level international intergovernmental consideration of financing for development

16. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should adopt draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.80, submitted following informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.36.

17. *It was so decided.*

18. *Draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.80 was adopted.*

19. *Draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.36 was withdrawn.*

20. **Mr. Escanero** (Mexico) said that the consensus regarding the draft resolutions relating to the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development was indicative of a desire for change and innovation with a view to strengthening the United Nations in the development field. Draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.82 would finalize the establishment of a political mechanism to ensure follow-up to the agreements and commitments reached at the International Conference on Financing for

Development and establish links between the various initiatives taken in that regard. The Monterrey Consensus must be implemented logically, in a spirit of shared responsibility. Draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.80 was more synoptic and marked the beginning of a new dynamic of communication at the political level, aimed at maximizing the role of the United Nations in world debates on the subject of development. The text should enable the working methods of the Second Committee to be improved and should contribute to the revitalization of the General Assembly by facilitating integration and coordination of follow-up to the major conferences. As for draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.62, he considered that the secretariat support envisaged for the follow-up to the Monterrey Conference was an important factor in achieving the objectives set.

Draft resolutions A/C.2/57/L.44, A/C.2/57/L.62 and A/C.2/57/L.74

21. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) introduced the statement in document A/C.2/57/L.74 concerning the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.62. The draft resolution envisaged a secretariat support structure for the follow-up to the Monterrey Conference, which would have to be financed within existing resources and from voluntary contributions. An analysis undertaken in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs had concluded that a staff of 14 would be a satisfactory starting point. Thirteen of the planned posts would be financed by the redeployment of existing resources and from voluntary contributions, but one D-2 post (Director of the new Office) would be financed under section 9 of the programme budget. No doubt some delegations would be wondering why an additional appropriation was necessary, since draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.62 stated that the new structure would be established utilizing existing resources. In that connection, he recalled General Assembly resolution 45/248, referred to in paragraph 7 of the statement of programme budget implications, which had reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate forum for administration and budgetary matters, with the collaboration of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. He added that the only solution was to request, in the context of the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, the creation of a D-2 post for 2003 and to charge it against the contingency fund. The matter had been placed on the programme of the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

22. **Mr. Christensen** (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the European Union, regretted that the statement of financial implications did not fully reflect the political will expressed in draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.62, which requested the Secretary-General to establish, as soon as possible, from within existing resources of the United Nations Secretariat, appropriate secretarial support arrangements along the lines envisioned in paragraph 48 of his report on the outcome of the Conference (A/57/344). In that paragraph the Secretary-General had referred to "a small core staff" for the new structure. It had been confirmed that the staff for the structure would come from redeployment within the Secretariat of the United Nations. The question of the secondment of staff by the parties concerned was not dealt with in the statement of implications. He expressed surprise that the text referred to new tasks to be carried out, and said that the 14 posts at the Professional level and above requested for the new Office exceeded the small core staff to which the Secretary-General had alluded in his report.

23. **Mr. Vallenilla** (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, emphasized that, in order to give concrete form to the commitments reached at Monterrey it was essential to establish a secretariat support structure, as indicated in draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.44. He was aware of the problems caused by the programme budget implications of the draft resolution. In light of the scale and complexity of the task to be accomplished, the appropriation for the structure's operations was very modest. The structure would have to not only draw up reports but also establish links with other entities such as the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization (WTO), non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other interested parties. He therefore requested that in 2004 all requisite measures be taken to allocate the financial resources needed to meet such an important challenge.

24. **Ms. Serwer** (United States of America) said it was her delegation's understanding that the activities in question would be financed within existing resources, as stated twice in the draft resolution.

25. **Mr. Sach** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that the questions concerning the

amount of resources, their adequacy in relation to the new support structure's mandate and the methods of financing would be considered by the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, taking account of draft resolutions A/C.2/57/L.62 and L.74 and on the basis of information concerning the appropriations under section 4 and those for the budget as a whole for the biennium 2002-2003. All programme resources had already been allocated for specific activities for the current biennium; therefore, the resources that could be redeployed immediately without jeopardizing current programmes were limited. However, resources had been earmarked for the financing of the 10 posts at the Professional level and above and the 3 General Service posts proposed in the statement of programme budget implications (A/C.2/57/L.74). There were extrabudgetary resources for financing temporary activities, although in the present case the structure to be established would be permanent. Consideration therefore had to be given to long-term financing, which would be examined in the context of the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005. The Programme Planning and Budget Division was aware that it was a priority activity, and would take that into account when submitting proposals to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session. It was doing all it could to permit basic staffing in 2003 within existing resources, extrabudgetary resources, redeployable resources and resources from the contingency fund.

26. **Mr. de Rojas** (Executive Coordinator, Financing for Development Office) gave details of the staffing of the new Financing for Development Office. At the time of the preparation of the Monterrey Conference, the Office had comprised at most 8 Professional staff and it had been planned to keep that number in order to ensure follow-up to the Conference and coordination of activities. At that time, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs had been undergoing restructuring, and it had been planned that the new Office would have an additional analysis function, to be performed by five staff members assigned from the Development Policy Analysis Division, which was to be abolished, and three Professional staff dealing with taxation questions from the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration. Counting the two existing staff members handling the coordination of financing for development, there were therefore 10 posts allocated to the Office and only four additional posts were being requested to ensure coordination of activities and establish contacts with all interested parties and national, regional and international institutions. Even though advantage had been taken of the reorganization of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in order to combine coordination and analysis activities within a single entity, it was true that, as the representative of Venezuela had pointed out, the resources allocated for the new Office were modest, indeed even insufficient.

27. **Mr. Christensen** (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the European Union, noted that draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.62 and the statement of programme budget implications made no reference to combining activities within a single structure as part of a reorganization of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and did not indicate that the staff of the new Office would be responsible for examining budgetary questions or carrying out studies on the global economy. He therefore requested details concerning the functions of the staff who would be assigned to the new support structure.

28. **Mr. de Rojas** (Executive Coordinator, Financing for Development Office) said that 5 of the 10 posts mentioned in paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.74 had been transferred from the Development Policy Analysis Division to the Financing for Development Office because they had already been contributing to the process of financing for development from their Division. Three posts (1 D-1, 1 P-3 and 1 P-2) would also be redeployed from the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration, which was responsible for taxation matters. The other two posts concerned persons who had already worked with the Office coordinating the process of financing for development and would be continuing those activities. There were also the additional posts (1 D-2, 1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 P-3) to be financed from available extrabudgetary resources, with the exception of the D-2 post.

29. **Mr. Christensen** (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the European Union, remarked that, while the programme budget implications also took into account the restructuring of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, they covered a broader range of activities than those envisaged in draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.44. Paragraph 4 of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.74 stipulated that, in the interest of optimizing the use of existing resources, it was the intention to carry out the programme of work

envisaged through consolidation of finance aspects of development and the redeployment of related staff resources; that was probably what had given rise to some confusion. It was his understanding that, in spite of the restructuring of the Department, the staff concerned would continue to perform their existing tasks and would not be given responsibility for following up the commitments made.

30. **Mr. Vallenilla** (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, considered that it was pointless to deal with the question of the restructuring of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which was not within the competence of the Committee. It was for the Department to decide how many posts it wished to redeploy. On the other hand, it was essential to consider the question whether the secretariat was to become operational in 2003. There was no longer time for hesitation, because the international community had committed itself to holding a high-level debate in October 2003, and the preparation of that debate had to begin. He acknowledged that the activities envisaged had to be financed within existing resources, but noted that the issue was problematic, and a pragmatic approach was therefore required.

31. **Mr. de Rojas** (Executive Coordinator, Financing for Development Office) stressed that the Secretariat was endeavouring to implement the provisions of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.62, especially its paragraph 4 to the effect that the functions of the new secretariat support structure should be of an integrating, cross-cutting and holistic nature and that it should serve to provide secretariat support to the intergovernmental processes. In the Secretariat view, the best way to do that was to combine analytical and more operational activities. The tasks associated with the posts to be redeployed predominantly concerned financing for development. That was why he considered that it was unfair to say that elements which had nothing to do with financing for development had been introduced into the programme budget implications, since the report of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/57/344) clearly stated that the creation of the Office would be linked to the general process of restructuring to be implemented.

32. **Mr. Christensen** (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the European Union, requested that the meeting be suspended to enable him to consult the members of his group.

The meeting was suspended at 12.40 p.m. and resumed at 12.55 p.m.

33. **Mr. Christensen** (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the European Union, reaffirmed the Union's full support for the implementation of the commitments made in Monterrey, the follow-up to the Conference and the creation of a support structure. However, the financial implications of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.62 did not reflect the political will expressed in the draft resolution, in the report of the Secretary-General on the matter and during the negotiations, namely that the functions of the new structure would be achieved through a transfer of posts. In the context of the process of strengthening the United Nations and the general reform that was under way, transfers were proposed, but those that had been requested for the new Financing for Development Office were not included in those financial implications. Furthermore, as stated by the representative of Venezuela, the strengthening of the United Nations was a different process from that envisaged in the draft resolution under consideration and would be considered in the context of the draft programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005. Consequently, the European Union could not subscribe to the proposals in paragraph 6 of the statement in document A/C.2/57/L.74, although it was prepared to join in the consensus in order to enable the new structure to be set up quickly.

34. *Draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.62 was adopted.*

35. *Draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.44 was withdrawn.*

36. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 93.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.